SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS

Replace the entire Summary of the Invention section with the following replacement section:

Various aspects of the present invention overcome many of the problems associated with the conventional connector assemblies, including many of the problems previously outlined.

In accordance with one aspect of the invention, a connector assembly which provides a fluid flow path that is isolated from the ambient environment comprises a first fitting, a second fitting, first and second resilient sealing members, two or more protrusions and corresponding slots, and at least one stripout layer. The first fitting includes a proximal end and aperture, and a socket. The aperture forms a portion of the fluid flow path and includes a proximal end. The socket has a sidewall and a proximal end. The second fitting includes a distal end, a proximal end, an aperture, and a socket. The distal end can be connected to a section of tubing. The aperture forms a portion of the fluid flow path and includes a proximal end. The socket has a sidewall and a proximal end. The first and second resilient sealing members are positioned in the sockets of the first and second fittings, respectively. The sidewall of each fitting surrounds a resilient sealing member. Each resilient sealing member includes a hollow body having opposite open ends and an interior passage extending between the open ends. Each resilient sealing member is formed from a material that is more resilient than the material of the fitting. The protrusions and corresponding slots cooperate to connect the first and second fittings to one another. The protrusions include bendable prongs which extend between the first and second fittings and engage the corresponding slots to interconnect the proximal ends of the first and second fittings. The removable stripout layer is movable between first and second positions. In the first position, the stripout layer is positioned between the interconnected first and second fittings, and the stripout layer overlies the ends of the first and second resilient sealing members. In the second position, the stripout layer is removed from the ends of the first and second resilient sealing members, and the resilient sealing members contact one another to create a fluid flow path through the first and second fittings via the apertures of the fittings. The stripout layer has a pull tab which extends beyond the periphery of the interconnected first and second fittings. The pull tab enables the stripout layer to be moved from the first position to the second position.

In accordance with another aspect of the invention, a connector which can be coupled to a mating connector to form a connector assembly that provides a fluid flow path isolated from the ambient environment comprises a fitting, a resilient sealing member, two or more protrusions, and a removable stripout layer. The fitting includes a distal end, a proximal end, an aperture and a socket. The distal end of the fitting can be connected to a section of tubing. The aperture of the fitting forms a portion of the fluid flow path. The aperture includes a proximal end, a bore, and a counterbore. The bore has a proximal end and is relieved at its proximal end by the counterbore which has a larger inner diameter than the bore. The socket has a side wall and a proximal end. The resilient sealing member is positioned in the socket of the fitting and the side wall of the socket surrounds the resilient sealing member. The resilient sealing member includes a hollow body having opposite open ends and an internal passage extending between the open ends. The resilient sealing member is formed from a material which is more resilient than the material of the fitting. The protrusions extend from the fitting and are connectable to the mating connector. The protrusions include prongs which are bendable and have catches and are engageable with slots of the mating connector. The removable stripout layer is moveable between a first position and a second position. In the first position, the stripout layer overlies an end of the resilient sealing member and the proximal end of the aperture. In the second position, the stripout layer is removed from the end of the resilient sealing layer and the proximal end of the aperture. The stripout layer has a pull tab which extends beyond the periphery of the fitting. The pull tab enables the stripout layer to be moved form the first position to the second position.

The novel features and characteristics of this invention are set forth with particularity in the appended claims. However, the invention may best be understood with reference to the drawings, described below, and the accompanying detailed description of preferred embodiments.